



Name of Project:	Senior Wellness Centers
Name of Organization:	District of Columbia Office on Aging Washington, D.C.
Choices for Independence Principle:	Evidence-Based Disease Prevention/Wellness

Description:

The DC Office on Aging has long recognized the importance of disease prevention and health and wellness programming as an integral part of the mission of the agency to promote the longevity, independence and dignity of the District's seniors. To fulfill this mission, the Office on Aging has committed itself to a long-term plan to provide a "Senior Wellness Center" in each of the eight wards of the District of Columbia. The purpose of the Centers is to enable older individuals to make behavior changes that will reduce their risk of disease, disability and injury.

The Senior Wellness Centers are designed to provide comprehensive and integrated health and wellness services and programs in a state-of-the art facility. The Wellness Centers serve as city-wide health education and applied learning centers with activities that focus on health education, training, personal development, peer interaction, support groups, health screening, nutrition counseling, wellness activities and non-traditional health oriented alternatives.

Key partners in this initiative include the Mayor's Office of the District of Columbia; DC Department of Health; BODYWISE Senior Fitness Program (a city-wide disease prevention and health promotion program); Providence Health Foundation and United Planning Organization, the current grantee operators of the Wellness Centers; and the Lead Agencies of the Office on Aging's Senior Service Network.

Currently, there are three active Senior Wellness Centers; with a fourth center to be open in the early summer of 2007, the Kennedy Senior Wellness Center in Ward 4. Plans are in

the works for the development and construction of centers in two other District wards; which are projected to be opened by September 2009.

The success of the Senior Wellness Centers initiative is credited to:

- Recognition, commitment and support at all levels of city government and within the Wards and communities of the District.
- Use of proven effective program models that can be replicated at the local community level.

For more information about the D.C. Senior Wellness Centers, contact Paulette Helman at 202-724-5622 or by email at Paulette.Helman@dc.gov.